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**0**, ADDRESS BOOK**◆** PREFERENCES**(11)** HELP**fil** LOG OFF**INBOX - READ MESSAGE [storefront@mindspring.com]****Date:** Thu, 05 Dec 2002 19:58:06 +0000**From:** Eyal Weizman[\[add to address book\]](#)**Reply-To:** Eya/ Weizman**To:** storefront@mindspring.com**Subject:** nice talking to you

The exhibition ffiThe Politics of Israeli Architecture and the catalog IBA Civilian Occupationl were to represent the Israel Association of United Architects (IAUA) in the International Congress of Architecture that took place in Berlin on July 2002.

It was conceived as an investigation of Israeli architecture by Israeli architects, scholars, photographers and journalists. It meant to supplement the prevalent historical/political analysis of the conflict with a detailed description of its physical transformations. It was to be placed before an international milieu of architects and point out that the Israeli Palestinian conflict has a clear spatial dimension and that as such there was an important, albeit little discussed, role for architects and planners in its making. Architecture was presented as a political issue, furthermore as the material product of politics itself.

The strategic use of territory in the exercise of state power is a well-known matter - state strategy is a profoundly spatial affair and as such reserves an important role for the people who transfer politics as forms into the ground. But posing the question of the responsibility and culpability of Israeli architects and of Israeli architecture within the context of the conflict, and especially in the construction of the settlements of the West Bank led to the exhibitionls banning by the same body that commissioned it - the IAUA.

Paradoxically, it was the very act of banning that finally merged architecture and politics and established the architect as a political actor. And since architecture was established as an extension of politics the questioned posed became: what politics? Whose politics? And what are its repercussions on the ground?

The fact that settlements are constructed beyond the 1967 line violates Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention that states: "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." Settling Israeli citizens in the Occupied Territories thus constitutes a war crime.

There is no place for any form of Israeli Architecture in Palestine as it establishes an essential condition for the execution of this crime. By taking up projects in the West Bank Israeli architects cross yet another red line. Their planning conforms to a mode of design that serves to oppress and disrupt the Palestinians. Thus, beyond the mere presence of Israeli settlements on occupied land, it is the way they have been designed - their size, form and distribution across the terrain - that directly and negatively affects the live and livelihood of Palestinians. According to the regional plans of politicians, suburban homes, industrial zones, infrastructure and roads are designed and built with the self proclaimed aim to bisect and squeeze out Palestinian communities or use Israeli civilians to supervise vital interests as plain cloth security personnel. This



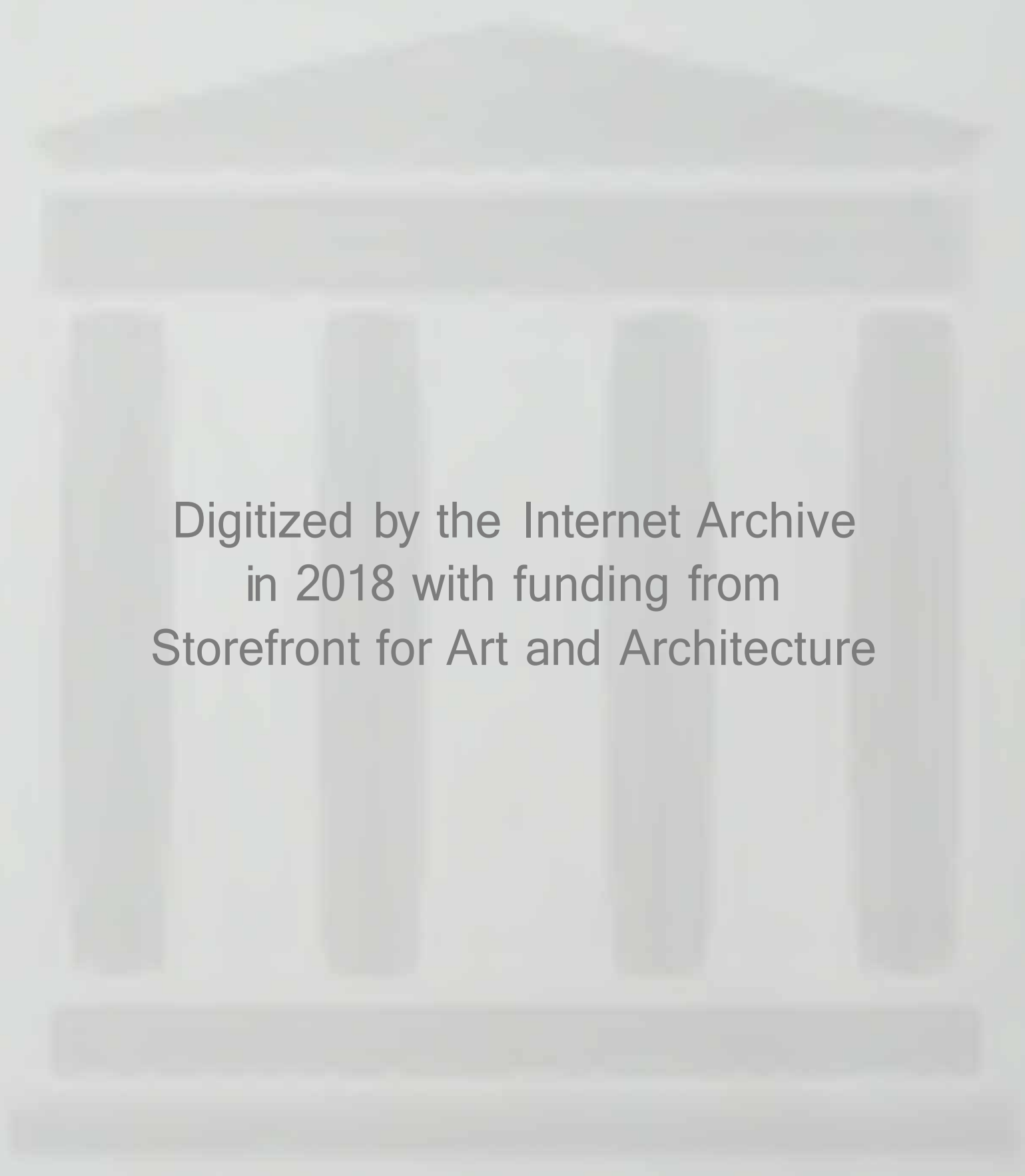
centralized, strategic and political use of planning was voluntarily transferred on ground by private architectural firms for financial profit. Planning in the West Bank is effectively executing a political agenda through spatial manipulations.

The evidence, as always is the case, is in the drawing. It is by investigating the working methods and tools of architects - the lines drawn on plans, masterplans, maps, and aerial photographs that the equation that sets material organization against the abuse of power, and the basic violations of human rights begins to unravel. Form, formal manipulations, and material organizations are the very stuff of architecture and planning, and it is in the very drawings that their objectives are stated. In Them the vernacular forms produced by the processes and forces inherent within the logic of the occupation could be traced.

In both its over-whole logic and in the repetition of its micro principles, architecture and planning are used as territorial weapons. Settlements form and location are manipulated for the bisection of a Palestinian traffic artery, for the surrounding of a village, for the supervision of a major city or a strategic cross road. In the very act of design, the architect is engaged in the reversal of his professional practice. If despite of the banality and simplicity of the statement - and in absence of the Architectural equivalent of the medical professionals Hippocratic oath - planning and architecture must still be carried out to the benefit of society, then when the architect's pen (or mouse) makes a particular angle, line or arc, or any other design decision for that matter that is explicitly meant at disturbance, suppression, aggression or racism, and when these clearly and brutally stand in breach of basic human rights, a crime has definitively been committed, and these practices are comparable to a medical doctor's involvement in torture. Although, or perhaps because, settlements are not the efficient planning work of military engineers, but the result of commissions to private architectural firms, that the question of personal responsibility and liability must be addressed. Building matter, just like the tank, the gun and the bulldozer is a weapon with which human rights are violated and crimes are carried out. This statement opens architecture to a different kind of critic - moral and ethical of course - but furthermore a legal judgement that must be persecuted by international law.

Israeli architectural and planning practices are different in intensity (quantity) rather than in essence (quality) from architectural practices around the world. Zionist history merged modern utopias with current architectural trends and grounded them in the context of a national-territorial conflict. In the history of Zionist urban and architectural form - each phase acted as a mirror to the style and methods of its time. But the conflict's violent intensity and its confinement to a limited space managed to accelerate the outcome of these parallel processes. Within and outside the West Bank, Israel could be seen as an example, an accelerator or even as a territorial laboratory playing alternative scenarios in fast forward mode for the fate of architectural trends.

Settlements could thus be seen as nothing but the last gesture in the urbanization of enclaves. Perfecting the politics of separation, seclusion and visual control, they could be seen as the end condition of contemporary urban and architectural formations such as suburban enclave neighborhoods and gated communities. The climb up the West Bank mountains coincided with the flight of the American middle class and its fortifying up behind protective walls, both formations setting themselves against the poverty and violence of the Third Worlds they have produced. After all, is it not the same period of 1980s Reaganism that has produced most number of settlement and to the terms fortified community and new urbanism? Is the principle of exclusive by-pass roads really that different from the deliberate carving up of poor communities with highways without exit? Do we really describe a unique place whose specificity renders its study obscure case or are we describing a worst case scenario of capitalist globalization and its spatial outfall?



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This is the crust of the matter, it means, if the comparison is accepted, that this collection could be read again replacing Israel Palestine and the West Bank with [S<sup>y</sup>] or with [S<sup>y</sup>] and even with [S<sup>y</sup>] in order to speculate what might happen to [S<sup>y</sup>]

We have not done this work in order to filearn from the West Bankl nor did we do it in order to come-up with design concepts to be applied in a European or a NYC environment.

We are opposed to the built culture that produced such artifacts, and in our writing try to express a clear adversary stance towards its practices and its political and strategic aims. If to be a member of an avant-garde means to align oneself with the Faustian forces of modernization and progress, even under the excuse of its ffishubversionl, we have no part in it. Our stance is a mere opposition.

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**ADDRESS BOOK****PREFERENCES****HELP****LOG OFF****INBOX - READ MESSAGE [storefront@mindspring.com]****Date:** Thu, 12 Dec 2002 17:38:18 +0000
**From:** Eyal Weizman  
[\[add to address book\]](#)
**Reply-To:** Eyal Weizman
**To:** rafi segal  
[info@storefrontnews.org](mailto:info@storefrontnews.org)
**Subject:** organization principle

Dear Sara, Chris,  
 following are some images of our exhibition  
 design for storefront.

**back wall:**

this wall is straightened with the column -  
 constructed in plaster and white washed.  
 a matrix is drawn along its whole length.  
 the vertical lines from left to right are a time  
 line marking years from 1967 to 2003  
 (36 lines)  
 the horizontal lines are latitude from -400m  
 below sea level to 1000 above sea level in 100  
 meters intervals (14 lines).  
 On this matrix all settlement masterplans (in  
 our cat. pages 62-65 i think) are placed  
 according to their date of construction and  
 their absolute latitude.  
 additional material is organized in a similar  
 fashion as well: diagrams - letters - news bits  
 = historical material.  
 this wall is the key to understanding the  
 historical factor in the occupation.

**mid wall front (from entrance):**

again a free standing 70mm whitewashed plaster  
 wall in three sections with opening of 120 cm  
 between.  
 the B'tselem map of the west bank cut into three  
 horizontal sections (north-central-south) pasted  
 on all the wall - floor to ceiling. (each at  
 about 310x400)





**mid wall back:**

possible ...three large prints of aerals from  
milutin labudovic - floor to ceiling  
or enlargements from the panorama image

**front wall back:**

curators text - black letters on white wall.  
annotated blow-ups from the panorama-film

**front corridor-sliver:**

we remove the frame on the right hand side as we  
enter and can see (maybe move through) a monitor  
with a film showing an israeli army bulldozer  
slowly destroying infrastructure.  
this is on a loop and the sound track -  
squeaking of chains etc .. is the soundtrack of  
the rest of the show.

**front facade**

one door is removed and blocked over by  
laminated wood and the rest left partly open and  
the same is applied to them.

**front space**

One film split into two screens is filmed - a  
settlement overlooking a Palestinian village.

**back space**

an archive with different publications, a small  
table and two chairs.  
supreme court proceedings  
Committee against house demolition publications  
Bimkom publications  
Civilian occupation 10 copies  
betselem report  
cabinet

that is as far as we are I hope this can help  
you start thinking about budgets.



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**1** ADDRESS BOOK**4** PREFERENCES**(11)** HELP**11** LOG OFF**INBOX - READ MESSAGE [storefront@mindspring.com]****Date:** Mon, 23 Dec 2002 10:43:37 +0000**From:** Eyal Weizman[\[add to address book\]](#)**Reply-To:** Eyal Weizman**To:** Storefront <info@storefrontnews.org>**Subject:** Re: saturday lunchtime?

hi Sarah Chris Francesca et all - first thing is happy Xmas.  
then -- we changed the mid wall with the map to a transparent plexy wall of two layers 3mm each. between them a printout of the map on transparent foil. the wall is held to the floor to ceiling with aluminum l shaped sections.

what this gives us is a less crowded area in the middle of the gallery. at least visually. but most important a way to mark out with markers any development on the ground as received by news and our own info. the btselem map has gradually in the last year been made less relevant - and some modifications will be made - they will be made with these color markers - bleu -- red -- Braun -- yellow -- much like in military war room. we will do it during the first few days - then we could send you updates that you could put in and erase yourselves.  
eyal

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**INBOX - READ MESSAGE [storefront@mindspring.com]****Date:** Mon, 06 Jan 2003 23:59:35 +0000**From:** Eyal Weizman <eyal@xxxxxx> *imagine a world where everyone is a terrorist*  
[add to address book]**Reply-To:** Eyal Weizman <eyal@xxxxxx>**To:** storefront@mindspring.com**Cc:** rafi segal <rafi@xxxxxx>**Subject:** Re: [No Subject]

Dear Sarah,  
we have made many modifications based on your comments and budget.  
attached here are few drawings.

- a plan of our current idea for the exhibition design
- an external elevation
- the existing wall
- the back wall
- perspectival view

we will describe each and hope therefore to cover all points.

plan-

as you can see we have modified the circulation pattern: we have made an exit and an entrance on both ends of the gallery to correlate both with the linear logic of the exhibition and with the perspectival axis we wanted.

we replaced the long wall at the center with a smaller version - the map still printed on transparent glass or plastic (in order to be able to update it - with colors that could be erased - and write things into it as the reality on the ground changes)  
the current dimensions of the transparent map wall is now 310cm in height and 200cm in width.

external elevation-

we did not mean the closing off of the facade as an act of urban warfare but as an act of control - both allowing the circulation to flow the way we proposed and having a very strong effect on the viewer.  
alternatively though we could think of placing a panorama on the out-facing wall you recently built (existing wall). this will allow glimpses into the landscape and its contradictions inside. every window reveals another detail.

existing wall-

along this wall all the photographs are hanged at eye level. their format is A1 50x80 so that the eye could float over them and the visitor could read them very closely in much detail. underneath the photos there is a shelf (40 cm deep) running the length of the wall. on the shelf under each image there is an A4 with detail explanation of the aerial image above it. the image itself is annotated with numbers in it... so that it is read like an aerial reconnaissance document.

this shelf will as well hold 5 Civilian Occupation catalogs and other publications - documents - and material that we will update by email or fax throughout the show. unfortunately we can expect drastic transformations and

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changes happening in the WB throughout this month and it would be outdated to present only the historical material.

back wall-  
here we must disagree that non architect could not appreciate the kind of data and its organization. it demonstrate very clearly the evolution of the settlement project. the climb up to the mountains and it as well shows during what years settlements were built on mass - how many settlers are in the west bank at any year and the relation of jumps in the graph to political events. (1977- reversal of power, 1995's outposts working against oslo ...etc ... )

perspectival view-  
instead of two projections we will have one video still of an Arab village as seen from a settlement. We could as well replace the projection with a wallpaper like image (floor to ceiling corner to corner) as you suggested in your mail.

regarding the points of your questions:  
in terms of aerial photographs there are few hundred scanned in mid res. (20MB) regarding the other series we can use all images but those of pavel wolberg. there are obviously more of each series, they are all scanned or could be scanned in printable quality.

perhaps we could talk on the phone - make things earlier - eyal is leaving for Rotterdam tomorrow morning and returns Wednesday (we could have a conference call on Wednesday) rafi leaves on the 13th and eyal on the 14th again. we both return on around the 20th.  
hope to talk to you soon.  
rafi and eyal

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From : "Sarah Herda"  
To : pcdierks  
Date : Mon, 03 Feb 2003 03:54:36 +0000

The following link is interesting:

<http://www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/MiddleEast/Palestine/Background.asp>

Text from that page is:  
Towards the end of the 1800s as the Jewish people were facing more persecution and anti-Semitism in Europe, there were questions as to how the Jewish people can overcome this. The biblical Promised Land led to a political movement, Zionism, to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. From 1920 to 1947, the British Empire had a mandate over Palestine. At that time, Palestine included all of Israel and today's Occupied Territories, of Gaza, West Bank, etc. The increasing number of Jewish people immigrating to the "Holy Land" increased tensions in the region. European geopolitics in the earlier half of the 20th century in the wider Middle East region contributed to a lot of instability overall. The British Empire, especially, played a major role in the region. During World War I, in 1916, it convinced Arab leaders to revolt against the Ottoman Empire (which was allied with Germany). In return, the British government would support the establishment of an independent Arab state in the region, including Palestine. Yet, in contradiction to this, in 1917, Lord Arthur Balfour, the British Foreign Minister, issued a declaration (the Balfour Declaration). This announced the British Empire's support for the establishment of "a Jewish national home in Palestine."  
As a further complication, there was a deal between Imperial Britain and France to carve up the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire and divide control of the region. The spoils of war were to be shared. As in 1885 in the Berlin Conference where Africa was carved up amongst the various European empires, parts of the Middle East were to also be carved up, which would require artificial borders, support of monarchies, dictators and other leaders that could be regarded as "puppets" or at least could be influenced by these external powers.  
After World War II, the newly formed United Nations (which then had less developing countries as members) recommended the partition of Palestine into two states and the internationalization of Jerusalem. The minority Jewish people received the majority of the land. The State of Israel was proclaimed on May 14 1948, but the Arab states rejected the partition of Palestine and the existence of Israel. The armies of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Egypt attacked but were defeated by the Israeli army.  
While the Jewish people were successful in creating their homeland, there was no Palestine and no internationalization of Jerusalem, either. In 1948 for example, Palestinians were driven out of the new Israel into refugee camps in Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and other regions. At least 750,000 people are said to have been driven out (or ethnically cleansed, as some have described it). However, this aspect is not usually mentioned by mainstream media when recounting various historical events.  
In 1956, Britain, France and Israel invaded the Sinai peninsula after Egypt nationalized the Suez canal due to fears of loss of a major economic trading route entry point for the West to the rest of the Middle East. While Egypt was defeated, international (US, really) pressure forced their withdrawal.  
In 1967, Israel simultaneously attacked Egypt, Syria and Jordan in a "pre-emptive strike" against the Arab troops along its borders. Israel captured key pieces of land, such as the strategic Golan Heights to the north on the border with Syria, to the West Bank from Jordan and the Gaza strip from Egypt. In fact, Israel more than doubled its size in the six days that this war took place. Since then, negotiations have been around returning land to pre-1967 states, as required by international law and UN resolutions.  
In 1973, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur to attempt to regain their lost land, but failed.  
In 1978, the Camp David accords was signed between Israel, Egypt and the US, and Israel returned Sinai back to Egypt in return for peace between them. To many in the Arab world, Egypt had sold out to US pressure. To the US and Israel, this was a great achievement; Egypt was obviously not to be underestimated in its capabilities, so the best thing would be to ensure it is an ally, not an adversary.  
In 1978, due to rising Hizbollah attacks from South Lebanon, where many Palestinian refugees still were, Israel attacked and invaded Lebanon. In 1982, Israel went as far up Lebanon as Beirut, as bloody exchanges followed between Israeli attempts to bomb Yasser Arafat's PLO locations, and Hizbollah retaliations. In 1985, Israel declared a strip of South Lebanon to be a Security Zone (never recognized by the UN, and hence Israel was always occupying this other nation.) Many civilians were killed on both sides. Israeli forces were accused of massacres on many occasions. After 22 years, Israel withdrew in May 2000. One of the leading Israeli military personnel was Sharon.  
In the late 1980s came the Palestinian uprising -- the Intifada. While there was much of a non-violence movement initially, the mainstream media concentrated on the violence. Young Palestinians confronted Israeli troops with nothing more than sling shots and stones. Thousands were killed by the Israeli military. Many suicide activists killed Israeli soldiers and caused other damage. Many innocent civilians were killed on both sides.  
1993 saw the Oslo Peace Accord, whereby Israel recognized the PLO and gave them limited autonomy in return for peace and an end to Palestinian claims on Israeli territory. This has been largely criticized as a one-sided accord, that benefits only Israel, not the Palestinian people. It resulted in Israeli control of land, water, roads and other resources.  
In 1994, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, ending twenty seven years of occupation. A Palestinian police force replaced them.  
In 1995, then Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, who had been involved in the latest peace processes, was assassinated by a Jewish extremist.  
In April 1996, Israeli forces bombed Lebanon for 17 days, with Hezbollah retaliating by firing upon populated areas of Northern Israel. Israel also shelled a UN shelter killing about 100 out of 800 civilians sheltering there. The UN claimed it was intentional.  
October 1998 sees the Wye River Memorandum outlining some Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank but Israel suspends it in January 1999 due to internal disagreements on its implementation.  
Further attempts through to the beginning of 2000 are made at continuing the Wye River accord, but keep breaking down due to Palestinian protests of continued new Israeli settlements.  
Camp David summit in 2000 fails to come up with solutions on Jerusalem.  
Ariel Sharon's visit to the Mount Temple sparks of the current round of protests and violence.  
In all this time then, the Palestinian people have been without any nation, and have had limited rights, while suffering from poverty at the same time. Israel continued to increase and expand their settlements giving up less and less land compared to what was promised. Many Palestinians (that are not Israeli Arabs since 1948) do not have the right to vote, or have limited rights, while paying full taxes. For over 3 decades, the Palestinian people have been living under a military occupation.  
The Palestinian National Authority, which Arafat now heads with a police force armed by the Israelis has itself been criticized for not serving the full interests of the Palestinian people. The police have been harsh on cracking down on some Palestinians, to the extent that it has drawn criticisms from the likes of Amnesty International and others.  
The frustration and injustice of the treatment of Palestinians has angered many citizens in the Arab world against US/Israeli policies. Palestinian frustration has spilled into extremism in some cases as well. Many militant groups from Palestine and other areas of the Middle East have therefore sprung up in recent years as well as past decades, performing acts of what the West and Israel describe as terrorism and what the groups themselves justify as freedom fighting (though achieving freedom through terrorist actions could arguably still be called terrorist organizations, despite claimed motives). Suicide bombings, and past acts of terrorism have terrorized Israeli civilians, making peace harder and harder to imagine, yet it has been easy to influence and recruit the young, impressionable and angry into extremist causes. As violence continues, it seems that it will remain easy to find recruits to violent causes.  
U.S involvement in the Middle East has also been seen as a critical issue. The U.S. and West's interests in the region been due to oil. Strong military and financial support of Israel lends well to a powerful ally in the region. (For that reason as well, other Arab dictators and corrupt rulers have also been supported and even helped into power. Saddam Hussain is one of them. Dictators that can be bought provide a useful check against possible popular uprising in the region and therefore, for the US ensure their "security" -- that is, their "national interests" are safeguarded and local puppets profit, while the people of the region end up suffering and losing out. (See the rest of the Middle East section on this site for more details on this.)  
While the UN Security Council has attempted to pass numerous resolutions critical of Israel the United States has vetoed almost all of them. Nevertheless, there have been some resolutions demanding that Israel return land that was captured in the 1967 war etc (such as UN Resolution 242). The 1948 UN Resolution 181 allowed for both Jews and Arabs to live in Israel, which goes counter to claims of some groups that Israel should not exist. Often the international community is critical of Israeli inaction, but the US veto prevents anything coming of it. Instead, Israeli land expansion and settlements have continued. The US has also provided Israel with enormous military aid, to the extent that in the Middle East, Israel has the most advanced and superior



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military. Their high tech/military industries are also very advanced. Israel also has nuclear weapons capabilities.  
"For ordinary Palestinians, self-rule has been a humiliating disaster. Seven years after Oslo, they are still living under occupation. The basic means of a decent human existence, which acknowledges their distinctive culture, history and suffering, is denied to them. When not completely withheld, their basic rights and entitlements are represented as concessions generously granted by their overlords. Meanwhile their leaders, frightened of losing their elite privileges and affluent lifestyles, collude with Israel in their betrayal." -- This peace offer is an insult to Palestinians, by Scott Burchill, The Australian (daily newspaper of Australia), October 12, 2000  
An additional source of frustration for the Palestinian people is that the land that is being settled by Israelis are usually prime land, and hence the various peace negotiations usually leave Palestine with the less usable land. Israel also thereby controls water sources. The non-contiguous land (Gaza and West Bank) and the Israeli control over Palestinian movement also means disconnection. This allows the possibility of providing cheap labor to Israel, so it is in their economic interest to pursue this type of division.  
The mainstream western media has traditionally capitalized on negative imagery and propaganda against Islam and the Arab world as a sort of way to also justify continued presence and involvement there.

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**From:** Eyal Weizman ~~xxxx@xxxxxx~~  
**To:** <storefront@mindspring.com>, <pcdierks>  
**Cc:** <sarahherda>  
**Date:** Monday, February 3, 2003 12:09 PM  
**Subject:** Re: opening

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The original introduction of the banned catalog reads:  
 National conflicts are characterized not only by the rapid processes of eruptive transformations. The slow duration of building and the lengthy bureaucratic mechanisms of planning form the scale at which territorial conflicts are played out. Throughout the last century, a different kind of warfare has been radically transforming the landscapes of Israel/Palestine. In it, the mundane elements of planning and architecture have been conscripted as tactical tools in the Israeli state-strategy, which sought in the organization of space and in the redistribution of its population, national and geo-political objectives. The landscape became the battlefield in which power and state control confront subversive and direct resistance.

The relationship between the landscape and the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is symbiotic. The terrain dictates the nature, intensity and the focal points of confrontation, while the conflict itself is manifested most clearly in the processes of transformation, adaptation, construction and bliteration of the landscape and the built environment.

In an environment where architecture and planning are systematically instrumentalized as the executive arms of the Israeli State, planning decisions do not often follow criteria of economical sustainability, ecology or efficiency of services, but are rather employed to serve strategic and political agendas. Space became the material embodiment of a matrix of forces, manifested across the landscape in the construction of roads, hilltop settlements, development towns and garden-suburbs.

#### Introduction

The exhibition 'The Politics of Israeli Architecture' and the catalog 'A Civilian Occupation' were supposed to represent the Israel Association of United Architects (IAUA) in the International Union of Architect's (UIA) Congress in Berlin in July 2002.

The exhibition and the catalog were conceived as investigations of Israeli architecture by Israeli architects, scholars, photographers and journalists. It meant to supplement the prevalent historical and political analysis of the conflict with a detailed description of its physical transformations. It was meant to be placed before an international milieu of architects and point out that the Israeli Palestinian conflict has a clear spatial dimension and as such, there is an important, albeit little discussed, role for architects and planners in its making. Architecture was presented as a political issue, furthermore as the material product of politics itself.

The strategic use of territory in the exercise of state power is a well-known matter - state strategy is a profoundly spatial affair and as such reserves a primary role for the people who transfer political goals as forms onto the ground. But merely posing the question of the responsibility



and culpability of Israeli architects and planners, within the context of the conflict and especially in the construction of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank, led to the exhibition's banning by the same body of architects that commissioned it, the IAUA.

Paradoxically, it was the very act of banning that directly merged architecture and politics and established the architect as a political actor. And since architecture was accepted as an extension of politics the questioned remained: what politics? Whose politics? And what are its repercussions on the ground?

The following collection brings for the first time since the banning the original material contained within the exhibition catalog. Occasional modifications were made in order to reformat the catalog into a book, and a few facts that accumulated during the year's wait were updated. The collection is composed of different episode, each opening a flashlight on a particular chapters in the history of Israeli architecture and planning. Starting at the pre-state days of Zionism, it moves through the period of early state planning and building to the colonization of the West Bank and Gaza by a series of Israeli Governments. Oren Yiftahel's article, Settlements as Reflex-Action, first published in Haaretz at the summer of 2001, was the inspiration for the exhibition and thus opens the collection. It argues that deeply embedded within the Zionist DNA is the Settlement Instinct, the compulsive use of new settlements, within or outside of Israel's international borders, for political reasons. It establishes an important link between the ethos of 'settling the land' and the use of planning for strategic and political purposes. The following essays are organized chronologically: Sharon Rotbard demonstrates how the pre-state strategy of the paramilitary 'Tower and Stockade' co-operative settlements made use of the double function of fortification and observation - a protective enclosure - that dominated its surrounding by the power of vision. These spatial technologies, upon which the political and military order of the frontier rested, became the principle guidelines, or the mould in whose image Israeli urban planning was thereafter crafted. Zvi Efrat's essay 'The Plan' deals with the early days of Israeli State Planning. He demonstrates the extent to which Israel was turned into one of the planning laboratories of the modern era. In it, he argues one of the most intense, comprehensive, controlled and efficient planning experiments were carried out. The article recounts the political demographic and functional failures of this plan.

That failure leads to the next phase of Zionist planning experiments - the suburban sprawl into the areas occupied in the 1967 Six-Day War, and to our account of the history of the mountain settlements of the West Bank. Our essay underlines the evolution of the West Bank settlements from early days agricultural co-operatives to the right wing's religious suburb. The text demonstrates how the very landscape was appropriated into a system of domination and control which is operated, to a large degree by the civilian population.

Eran Tamir's interview of the architect and town planner Tomas Leitersdorf, planner of Ma'ale Edumim and Emanuel in the West Bank, constitutes a first-hand account of the role of the architect as the executive arm of political decisions. Leitersdorf is important for setting the benchmark standards for the design of mountaintop settlements in the West Bank. In a cool, analytical and professional tone his interview is an insight into client-architect relations. It shows how deeply engraved within the praxis are political and strategic considerations, and how little they are acknowledged by the architect himself.

In his article 'The Lowest Points in Israel', Gideon Levy tells of the repercussions of settlements on Palestinian daily life. As a long time human rights activist and a columnist covering Palestinian human rights, his article attempts to describe the other pole on the axis of vision - the



Palestinian view of the settlements from below. He describes the animosity of the Palestinian to the domestic-monuments that have taken control over their land and freedom of movement.

Yaron Benvenisti, a distinguished writer and columnist, ex-deputy Major of Jerusalem, and an expert on the Israeli Palestinian conflict was asked to write on 'the morning after'. His article, closing this book with the title 'In the Light of the Morning After' outlines two possible scenarios for the future of the settlements and the West Bank.

The articles are interlaced with photo-essays that function not as illustrations but as independent contributions. The photographs of Milutin Labudovic and Daniel Bauer are aerials taken as a part of Peace Now's campaign to record the establishment and expansion of illegal outpost-settlement in the West Bank. Beyond being mere recordings of settlement growth, they show clearly the contrast between the enclosed, pre-planned and sometimes pre-fabricated out-post settlements and the fabric of the Arab town.

The photographs of Nadav Harel, Efrat Shvily and Eyal Weizman are critical portraits of building practices in the settlements, taken at eye level. Nadav Harel images are stills taken from his documentary 'Area K - A Political Fishing Documentary'. In it, he traces the construction of a small fishing settlement in the northern shore of the Gaza Strip. Settlers talk to the camera in front of their newly built homes. The sense of ideal and luxurious rural life is contrasted with the violence of its setting seen through the windows or over the fence.

Eyal Weizman's photographs describe the use of vision as an organizing principal in the layout of settlements. The images, taken along a 3600 tour around the inner ring of a typical settlement, show how in an urban scale 'optical device' a series of different views is framed by the architecture. This view is part of a visual matrix laid-out to supervise and control the terrain.

The photographs of Efrat Shvily show settlements as ghost towns. Shot in 1993, they are a chilling testimony for the fact that so many of the construction of the West Bank is not market based, but state directed, and that therefore so many homes in them are left empty. This is true today. According to Peace-Now there are thousands of uninhabited dwellings in the West Bank. The civilian occupation relies on the presence of civilian architecture to demonstrate Jewish presence across the landscape. In Shvily's photographs architecture replaces human presence. The question whether there are a pair of eyes looking out of the windows of settlement homes becomes irrelevant as the affect of domination is achieved by the mere presence of these buildings.

Historical photographs like the series of Zoltan Kluger accompanying Sharon Rotbard's 'Tower and Stockade' and those collected by Zvi Efrat for his exhibition of 'The Israeli Project', are taken with a different sentiment behind the camera aperture. They reflect to a large degree the bravado and euphoria prevalent in the creation of a new place and a new state. But their presence along side other critical images and texts make their reading problematic.

The settlement masterplans brought here for the first time, and the map of the West Bank show how the occupation produced particular and locally developed spatial arrangements - a vernacular of occupation - whose function is discernible in their very form. These drawings are important components in the analysis of the relation between urban form and state power. In giving a visual backup to the article The Mountain, they demonstrate how directly and explicitly, domination and control are inscribed into the way that space is organized. The series of masterplans organized according to the date of their construction and to their topographical latitude demonstrate a typological evolution in settlement form. The abstract layout





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of the co-operative agricultural settlements of the relatively flat Jordan Valley is replaced, with the change of power in Israeli politics, by the elastic and a-morphic mountain settlements - rural suburbs, whose form attempts to adapt an ideal, concentric social and strategic model, to diverse topographical conditions.

The map of the West Bank, researched and charted by Eyal Weizman for B'tselem, shows how the distribution of settlements across the landscape managed to generate the complete fragmentation of the terrain. The map marks precisely and for the first time the location, size and form of settlements and the enormous disparity between the area they cover, the boundaries of their jurisdiction, and the areas intended for their future growth. The success of the settlement project is made clear in this drawing: how with a built fabric comprising less than 2% of the total land of the West Bank, settlements, strategically placed, managed to generate a complete territorial control. What we see on the map as an end result, was already clearly stated as objectives on early 1970s and 1980s masterplans.

The fact that settlements are constructed beyond the 1967 international border violates Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention that states: "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." Settling Israeli citizens in the Occupied Territories is thus contrary to International law.

By taking up projects in the West Bank, Israeli architects cross yet another red line. Their planning conforms to a mode of design that serves to oppress and disrupt local populations. Thus, beyond the mere presence of Israeli settlements on occupied land, it is the way they were designed - their size, form and distribution across the terrain - that directly and negatively affects the live and livelihood of Palestinians. According to the regional plans of politicians, suburban homes, industrial zones, infrastructure and roads are designed and built with the self-proclaimed aim to bisect, disturb and squeeze out Palestinian communities. Israeli civilians, are placed in a position to supervise vital national interests as plain cloth security personnel. This centralized, strategic and political use of planning was voluntarily transferred on ground by private architectural firms for financial profit. Planning and building in the West Bank is effectively executing a political agenda through spatial manipulations.

The evidence, as always is the case, is in the drawing.-->

"The evidence, as always is the case, is in the drawing.-->"  
by "inv: igati g he working n{ hods U>ols of "architects - the lines drawn on plans, masterplans, maps, and aerial photographs that the equation setting material organization against the abuse of power begins to unravel. Formal manipulations and programmatic organizations are the very stuff of architecture and planning, and it is in the very drawings that their effects are stated. In them the forms produced by the processes and forces inherent within the logic of the occupation could be traced. In both its over-whole logic and in the repetition of its micro conditions, architecture and planning are used as territorial weapons. Settlement forms and location are manipulated for the bisection of a Palestinian traffic artery, for the surrounding of a village, for the supervision of a major city or a strategic crossroad. In the very act of design, the architect is engaged in the reversal of his professional practice. If despite the banality and simplicity of the statement - and in absence of an architectural equivalent of the medical profession's Hippocratic oath - planning and architecture must still be carried out to the benefit of society. If the architect draws a particular angle, line or arc, or makes any other design decision that is explicitly and practically meant at disturbance, suppression, aggression or racism, and when these clearly and brutally stand in breach of basic human rights, a crime has been committed.

Although, or perhaps because, settlements are not the efficient planning



work of military engineers, but the result of architectural commissions to private architectural firms, that the question of responsibility and liability must be addressed. Building matter, just like the tank, the gun **and** the bulldozer is a weapon with which human rights are violated and crimes are being carried out.

This statement opens architecture to a different kind of critic. Beyond the mere re-introduction of morality and ethics into architectural debate - does this not call for a legal judgement that should be persecuted by law?

Israeli architectural and planning practices are different in intensity (quantity) rather than in essence (quality) from other architectural practices around the world. Zionist history merged modern utopias with changing architectural and urban trends and grounded them in the context of a national-territorial conflict. In the history of Zionist urban and architectural form - each phase acted as a mirror image, distorted at times, to the style and methods of its time. But the conflict's violent intensity and its confinement to a limited space managed to accelerate the life span of urban and building types eventuating their effect. Within and outside the West Bank, Israel could be seen as an example, an accelerator or even as a territorial laboratory playing alternative scenarios in fast forward mode for the fate of these typologies.

Settlements are thus nothing but the last gesture in the urbanization of enclaves. Perfecting the politics of separation, seclusion and visual control, they could be seen as the end condition of contemporary urban and architectural formations such as suburban enclaved neighborhoods and gated communities. The climb up the West Bank Mountains coincided with the flight of the middle classes and their 'farting up' behind protective walls - both formations setting themselves against the poverty and violence of the Third Worlds they have produced. After all, is it not the same period of 1980s Reaganism that has produced most number of West Bank settlements and introduced the terms 'gated community' and 'new urbanism'?

Is the principle of exclusive by-pass roads really that different from the deliberate carving up of poor communities with highways without exit? Are we actually describing a unique place whose specificity renders its study a local curiosity? Or, is this not a worst case scenario of capitalist globalization and its spatial fall out.

The editors, Tel-Aviv November 2002

